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From: Thomas, Craig
Sent: Wed 1/15/2014 1:33:11 PM
Subject: FW: FEMA Region V OSS 01-15-2014

There's an article under the Environmental/Chemical/Hazmat sector that says the 4-methylcyclohexane methanol plume from West Virginia should reach Evansville, IN by this weekend. Given the press that incident has received we might want to monitor it closely.

Craig

From: FEMA-R5-Watch [mailto:FEMA-R5-Watch@fema.dhs.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2014 5:26 AM
Subject: FEMA Region V OSS 01-15-2014

FEMA Region V Open Source Summary

Regional Points of Interest

Wednesday, 15 January, 2014

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Regional Weather and Impacts

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Piece of Polar Vortex to Bring Another Surge of Cold Air

(Accu Weather)

Midwest/East Coast: Colder weather will move in for the end of the week. This surge of cold air will be a piece of the polar vortex* breaking off and moving southward. The cold air will begin to push into the northern Plains and Great Lakes on Thursday and will continue. This blast of colder air will produce temperatures that are closer to 10 degrees lower than average. Many places along the I-95 corridor will still have highs near or above freezing at the peak of the chill

this weekend. Even so, the air mass will be cold enough to allow temperatures to drop below zero at night from Minnesota into northern Wisconsin.

**Watch Officer's Comment: A polar vortex is a large pocket of very cold air, typically the coldest air in the Northern hemisphere, which sits over the polar region during the winter season.*



Midwest Forecast

(TWC)

Midwest: Snow showers will fall across much of Michigan on Wednesday. Light snow will fall from eastern North Dakota, through Minnesota to northwest Wisconsin Wednesday. Light snow will likely be mixed with freezing drizzle across parts of North Dakota and western Minnesota. The rest of the region is expected to be dry. Windy conditions will prevail across the northern Plains. Wednesday will be much colder across the Upper Midwest and Great Lakes with highs in the teens. Across the Ohio Valley, colder highs around the 30's will be felt.

Illinois far ahead of average winter snowfall totals this

(Republic)

Champaign, Illinois: According to Jim Angel, State Climatologist, Illinois' snowfall is far ahead of the average winter. Angel said, in the southern half of the state snowfall has been

anywhere from 200 to 500 percent of the average and in the northern half of Illinois totals are 125 to 200 percent of the average. The heaviest snow so far has been in northeast Illinois, anywhere from 25 to 30 inches.

Central Illinois received about 17 inches to 23 inches, while southern Illinois got anywhere from 5 to 15 inches. By mid-January, last winter, most of the state had only had 5 to 15 inches of snow.

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Environmental/Chemical/HAZMAT Sector

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Evansville utility officials monitoring chemical that was spilled upriver in West Virginia

(Courier Press)

Evansville, Indiana: Evansville Water & Sewer Utility officials are monitoring issues stemming from a chemical spill about 700 miles away in Charleston, West Virginia (W.V.), and its potential impact on local water. The chemical, stored by Freedom Industries and used for washing coal, spilled Thursday in Charleston, W.V., along the Elk River, resulting in a state of emergency and a ban on any water use, except for toilet flushing, for at least 300,000 West Virginians. The substance in question is called MCHM, or 4-methylcyclohexane methanol, and authorities know little about its toxicity. The Elk River flows into the Kanawha River, which is a tributary of the Ohio River. In Cincinnati, Mayor John Cranley ordered Ohio River valves into the city's water system be shut down for at least 20 hours starting Tuesday night until the plume passes. Coast Guard officials estimate the plume is likely to reach Evansville by the weekend. The plume's concentration level is undetermined and will depend on factors such as rain and the Ohio's flow rates. The city's Utility will examine two key issues as the plume approaches: the chemical's concentration in the Ohio, which can be tested, and whether the chemical floats on the river's surface, mixes completely or sinks.

Bill would spend \$300M on Great Lakes restoration

(Detroit Free Press)

Michigan: A spending bill by Congress would allocate \$300 million to a Great Lakes cleanup that had been threatened with a massive cut during last year's budget fight. The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is a program dealing with some of the lakes' most serious environmental problems such as invasive species, loss of wetlands and other wildlife habitat, toxic pollution and runoff that causes algae blooms. It has gotten around \$300 million in most years since funding began in 2010. But last year, a House subcommittee proposed slashing the 2014 allocation to just \$60 million, an 80 percent cut that Great Lakes advocates said would gut the program, which

has bipartisan support in Congress.

The compromise measure released this week also would boost spending on another program targeted with an 80 percent funding cut last year that provides loans to communities for improving drinking water and sewage treatment infrastructure. That program is slated to receive \$1.44 billion in 2014, up from \$1.37 billion in 2013. About one-third of that money usually goes to the Great Lakes region, where sewer overflows are a serious problem.

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Public Health and Healthcare Sector

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'Nightmare Bacteria' Outbreak In Illinois Sickens 44 People At Chicago Hospital

(Medical Daily)

Chicago, Illinois: Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, Illinois, has become home to the biggest “nightmare bacteria” outbreak in the United States to date. Officials from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say 44 people have fallen ill due to drug-resistant infections from bacteria that could hold “potentially catastrophic consequences.” According to the CDC, Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacteriaceae (CRE) is a family of over 70 bacteria, which over time has become resistant to antibiotics known as carbapenems. CRE reports in the past decade have increased fourfold and around 18 percent of long-term healthcare facilities treated a patient that suffered from a CRE infection back in 2012. Thirty-eight of the 44 people from Northeastern Illinois infected by CRE had undergone endoscopic surgery at Advocate Lutheran General within the past year. Subsequently, 243 patients who had also gone in to the hospital for an endoscopic procedure were tested for the infection. Trace amounts of the bacteria were discovered in some of the patient’s digestive tract. The largest spread of CRE, prior to the current outbreak in Illinois, was reported at a Denver hospital in 2012 in which eight patients fell ill.

3 people near Toledo have died from flu

(Dayton Daily News)

Toledo, Ohio: County health officials say three people have died from a dangerous flu strain since the end of last year in the Toledo area. The Toledo Lucas County Health Department says two of the deaths occurred last week, while the third person died on New Year's Eve. The county’s health commissioner says all three died from the H1N1 strain of the flu virus. The Blade newspaper in Toledo reports that two of those who died were Toledo women in their early 60s. A 70 year old resident died near the end of last week from flu-related symptoms. A fourth person from Temperance, Michigan, died on Dec. 28 at a Toledo hospital of complications from the H1N1 virus.

Emergency Management/Preparedness Sector

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Robots compete in performing emergency response task

(HSNW)

National: Since the March 2011 Fukushima nuclear accident in Japan, the U.S. government's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) created the Robotics Challenge. Its goal is to develop ground robots that can work in dangerous, degraded, human-engineered environments. Sixteen robots participating in the DARPA Robotics Challenge Trials last month performed tasks such as opening doors or climbing a ladder, all tasks aimed to speed the development of robots that could one day perform a number of critical, real-world, emergency response tasks at natural and human-made disaster sites. While most of the entries were engineered to resemble humanoids with two legs, JPL's RoboSimian tackled tasks like climbing over rough terrain on all four of its limbs.

U.S. disaster preparedness threatened by funding problems

(Homeland Security)

National: The 9/11 attacks in New York City prompted large increases in government funding to help communities respond and recover after man-made and natural disasters. This funding, however, has fallen considerably since the economic crisis in 2008. Furthermore, disaster funding distribution is deeply inefficient: huge cash infusions are disbursed right after a disaster, only to fall abruptly after interest wanes. These issues have exposed significant problems with our nation's preparedness for public health emergencies. Researchers list seven recommendations to enhance preparedness for public health emergencies in the U.S.:

- The federal government should develop and assess measures of emergency preparedness both at the community-level and across communities in the U.S.
- Measures developed by the federal government should be used to conduct a nation-wide gap analysis of community preparedness.
- Alternative ways of distributing funding should be considered to ensure all communities have the ability to build and sustain local coalitions to support sufficient infrastructure.
- When monies are released for projects, there should be clear metrics of grant effectiveness.
- There should be better coordination at the federal level, including funding and

grant guidance.

- Local communities should build coalitions or use existing coalitions to build public-private partnerships with local hospitals and other businesses with a stake in preparedness.
- Communities should be encouraged to engage in ways to finance local preparedness efforts.

Transportation Sector

Storm-damaged Metra cars set to return this week

(Chicago Sun-Times)

Chicago, Illinois: Some Metra trains are still feeling the effects of last week's deep freeze and will be running with fewer cars to allow servicing, in the next few days. The process of fixing winter-damaged train cars should be completed in the next few days or by Friday at the latest, said Metra CEO. Union Pacific has felt the most winter damage, with 22 cars taken out of service Monday, causing shortened trains with only 11 returned by Tuesday. The Milwaukee District saw three trains shortened by winter servicing Monday and Rock Island District saw one.

Energy Sector

Nuclear power for Indiana?

(Indy Star)

Indiana: Indiana hasn't tried to build a nuclear power plant since two efforts fizzled in the 1980s over high costs, nearly bankrupting one of the companies in the process. Senate Bill 302 has been introduced which provide financial incentives to utilities to build nuclear plants. Sen. Jim Merritt, R-Indianapolis, chairman of the Senate Utilities Committee, says nuclear energy is clean, safe and reliable and should have a place in Indiana's energy lineup. Senate Bill 302, would allow utilities to build a nuclear plant, or a small modular reactor, and pass along the construction costs to customers years before the plant goes into operation. Indiana is one of the few Midwest states with no nuclear plants and has long relied on abundant coal reserves for energy. The Midwest is awash in aging nuclear plants, some built in the mid-1970s. Illinois has 11 nuclear plants, Michigan has four, and Ohio has two. Many of them are approaching the end of their licensed life.

V/R,

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